

INTERNATIONAL MILITARY TRIBUNAL FOR THE FAR EAST

NO. 1

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, and ors.

- against -

ARAKI, SADAQ, and ors.

I, FREDERICK HUGH BASHFORD, make oath and say as follows;

1. My Army number is NX 70685; rank, Chaplain/Captain; full name, Frederick Hugh Bashford, 2/4 CCS. A.I.F.; home address, 3 Wyargine Flats, The Esplanade, Balmoral, New South Wales.
2. On 2 June 1942 the undermentioned men of the 2/4 A.T. Regt. escaped from captivity at Tavoy aerodrome camp, in which I was confined at that time:-

VX45344 W/O H. Quitterton M.W.
VX31946 Sgt. Donerher C.L.
VX31670 Bdr. Cumming T.S.
VX7043 Bdr. Glover A.W.

VX18444 L/Bdr. Bennett A.A.
VX47903 Gnr. Wilson J.A.T.
VX27292 Gnr. Reeve A.
VX46835 Gnr. Jones A.H.

The men were recaptured. Brigadier Varley (now deceased) was notified to be present at their execution at 5 p.m. on 6 June 1942. Brigadier Varley drafted a letter of protest to the Japanese camp commandant at Tavoy Aerodrome camp. This letter was delivered personally. This letter of protest was of no avail, and Brigadier Varley then decided to see the highest-ranking Japanese officer in the district to protest against the execution. He was taken to Major Itsui at Tavoy.

3. If any trial of these men was held they certainly were not represented by a member of the A.I.F. or F.E.F. I went to the place of execution with Brigadier Varley and saw them executed.

(Signed) F.H. BASHFORD.

Sworn before me at Sydney on the
fourth day of September 1946.

(Signed) A.J. MANSFIELD.
Judge of Supreme Court of Queensland.

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- AGAINST -

ARAKI, SADAQ, AND ORS.

I, GEORGE ERNEST RAMSAY of SYDNEY in the State of New South Wales, make oath and say as follows:-

1. I was NX34999, Lt. Col. George Ernest Ramsay, 2/30 Australian Infantry Battalion, when I became a P.O.W. at Singapore in February 1942. In April, 1942, I was transferred to 2/18 Battalion.
2. On reaching MERGUI on 24 May, 1942, it was obvious that no preparations had been made for our reception. The Japs evidently had been moving around looking for a camp site and finally had decided on the Mergui School.
3. The area was capable of holding about 600 to 800 with reasonable comfort but on arrival at MERGUI there were 500 United Kingdom troops from SUMATRA and I was told that I had to take command of the whole force - that was, there was to be a total of 1500 men in this school camp. A great number of the British troops had dysentery. Conditions for the first 10 days or more were very overcrowded; there was no proper sanitary accommodation; the waterlogged ground prevented the digging of more latrines. There were no hospital facilities. We had 17 deaths at Mergui - 12 British and 5 Australians.
4. Three men were shot at Mergui - Australians named Davies, Bell and Schubert. They allegedly tried to escape. I am satisfied that the first 2 did try; but the third man, Schubert, was only out trying to get some food. I made representations in each case to the Japanese commander, pointing out that it was contrary to the Conventions; he pointed out in his turn that he would place my representations before Major ITSUI, commander of the garrison for the whole area. I was assured that my representations were placed before the commander and I was informed that he (ITSUI) was quite adamant, and that the men were to be shot. They were shot. We were not present. They were taken away on a truck early one morning and we did not actually see them at any time. We were subsequently officially informed, verbally, that they had been shot. In the case of Schubert, I was assured that nothing would happen to him before I was seen again - that once more they were forwarding my representations to ITSUI, and then they told me that Schubert would not be shot until I had been notified. In his case, when he was first captured, he aggravated the offence by jumping out of the Jap guardroom window; had he not done that I might have been able to save him. In fact, the padre spoke to me one morning

and said he had passed a truck and Schubert was in it with his hands tied, and Schubert as the truck sped past had called out "Does the Colonel know they're going to shoot me?". I went up to the Jap commander's quarters and on the way there I heard a shot or shots. I reminded the commander of his promise that the man would not be shot without first notifying me, but he said that it could not have done any good, since ITSUI had ordered that Schubert had to be shot.

5. We got to Tavoy in late August or September, 1942. The camp consisted of mixed forces including 200 Dutch from the Netherlands East Indies. I was in Tavoy for about 4 months. Some men were caught whom the Japs alleged were stealing from the Jap stores. Two men were beaten - Minton and Gaut. Also Sgt. Goggin. They were taken away to Tavoy gaol. They reported to me on their return. There was a Jap sergeant in charge of the camp and he said he had no jurisdiction over the KEMPEI TAI. According to the story of the three men, they were tortured, and a Burmese assisted the Japs at the gaol. Minton was made to kneel with a pole tight in behind his knees and he was forced backwards, while a KEMPEI TAI Jap stood at one end of the pole and the Burmese on the other. They worked up and down at the ends of the pole, forcing it to move backwards, and roll in between his knees. A Jap officer stood in front of him and hit him back with a golf club each time he tried to lean forward to ease the pain. Gaut was punished in similar style, but in addition he had big weals across his back from a knotted rope - his back was hurt and when I last saw him he was not fully recovered from his back injury. I saw him about 2 years afterwards, the last time I saw him. I saw him immediately after the torture. Minton had red bruises behind his knees. Gaut's back was strained.

6. Men at Tavoy did aerodrome work. They were enlarging the drome. It was a military drome.

Sworn before me at Sydney

on the tenth day of September, 1946. /s/ G. E. Ramsay.

/s/ R. L. Deasey J.P.